

a.) Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) An isolated DNA coding for a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

5. (Previously Presented) An isolated DNA comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

6. (Previously Presented) An isolated DNA which is hybridizable with DNA consisting of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2 at 65°C fixed on a filter in the presence of from 0.7 to 1.0 mol/liter NaCl, followed by washing at 65°C with 0.1 to 2-fold concentration SSC solution, wherein the isolated DNA codes for a polypeptide having transaldolase activity.

7. (Currently Amended) A recombinant DNA obtained by ligating the DNA of any one of claims 4-6 or 7 with a vector.

8. (Original) A transformant carrying the recombinant DNA of claim 7.

Claim 9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) The transformant according to claim 8, wherein the transformant has an ability to produce an aromatic amino acid or aromatic vitamin.

11. (Previously Presented) A process for producing an aromatic amino acid or aromatic vitamin, which comprises:

culturing the transformant of claim 10 in a medium to thereby produce and accumulate in culture the aromatic amino acid or aromatic vitamin, and recovering the aromatic amino acid or aromatic vitamin from the culture.

Claim 12 (Cancelled).

13. (Currently Amended) The transformant according to claim 8, wherein the transformant has a reduced ability to produce a substance selected from the group consisting of L-histidine, riboflavin, ~~nucleic acids and nucleic acid-associated substances and nucleic acids~~.

14. (Currently Amended) A process of culturing, which comprises:

culturing the transformant of claim 13 in a medium to thereby produce and accumulate substances in culture, and recovering the substances from the culture.

15. (Previously Presented) A process for producing a polypeptide described in following (1) or (2):

(1) a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1;

(2) a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence which is at least 95% homologous to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and having transaldolase activity, which comprises the steps of:

culturing the transformant of claim 8 in a medium to thereby produce and accumulate the polypeptide in culture, and

recovering the polypeptide from the culture.

Claim 16-18 (Cancelled).